

AN
EPISTLE
To all the
CALLED
AND
Chofen of God.

BY William Smith.

Printed in the Year 1678.

THE
GALLIED

Chosen of God

1771

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An Epistle to all the Called and Chosen of GOD.

Dear Friends,

IN the deep Sense of that living Voice, which hath called you out of **Darkness**, to the **Light of Life**; there is something upon me to communicate unto you, for the furtherance of your Faith and mutual Joy, and for the Settling and Establishing your Hearts and Minds in the Power of the Gospel of Christ, which hath been, and still is preached unto you for Life and Salvation; that as the Lord hath called you by his Heavenly Voice, so you may all obey from your Hearts that blessed Doctrine, which by his Holy Spirit hath been plentifully held forth amongst you, unto Conversion, Edification and Comfort; that through your Obedience you may witness the Lord to make choice of you, as a peculiar People, to shew forth his Praise, and so make your Calling and Election sure, For though many may be called, yet if they do not obey from the Heart that Spirit by which they are called, they may not be chosen; and so a Profession of Truth may be held out of the Life and Power of it; and you cannot but know what all Professions are, out of the Life and Power of Truth; For when you were seeking after God in bare Professions, you could not find true Satisfaction to your Souls; but were cumbered about many things, and wanted One Thing that was only needful; and now the Lord in his Mercy hath enlightened you with his true Light, in which you see the many things, and their end.

tiness, and are come to know One Thing, which is the
 Fulness, and in which ye have all Life, Power and Bless-
 ings; and so far as ye are come to witness the Sub-
 stance, ye have the true savour of good Things in one
 Thing, where all is contained; and it is the Love of
 God unto you, that hath so disposed your Hearts towards
 himself, and as a Cord hath drawn you out of things be-
 low, which are changeable, to a feeling of that which
 is Immortal, and never changeth; and as the Love of
 God is the ground of your change from things below
 into things that are above, so it is a safe and sure
 Foundation for you to stand upon; for in it self it doth not
 admit of any Alteration, but is alwayes firm and sure in
 its own Nature and Life; and as ye are fastened to it,
 and stand upon it, you will find it to be a Rock of Strength
 unto your Feet: And what can be more desirable to
 you, then the Thing that ye have found, the Thing
 which in it self is of an Immortal Nature, and yieldeth
 Immortal Riches? can you fix your Eye *upon any thing among*
the many things, or upon all the many things, to desire after any
 one or all of them? Can you part from your Foundation,
 which is sure and safe, and is a Rock of Strength to your
 Feet, to joyn or close with any thing, or things, which are of
 a lower degree in nature and quallity? Oh! no, my Friends,
 your Safety is to stand in that which is safe in it self; yea,
 to stand in the Light, where the Love of God first reach-
 ed unto you, and by which ye have felt the greatness
 of his Power working in you; in that is your safety,
 as being safe in it self: For you may be tried with an
 Hour of Temptation, but as you stand in the Light and
 Power of God, ye will overcome it, and so you will feel
 the Rock to be Strength to your Feet, that they may not
 slip, and by the mighty Power of God you will be kept,

as ye stand and abide in it, and the Hour of Temptation will pass over; and so you will not fall into Snares to be entangled, but walk in the pleasant Path of Life to your endless Comfort: For what were your dayes when ye were cumbred about many things? Were they not full of Trouble, Grief and Sorrow? Did not the Seed Mourn whilst ye were professing God in that nature, which gloried in Appearance only? And did you not then go as a People bowed down under the Bondage of Corruption? And were not many of you in that time cast down, as a People without Hope? and were you not brought to lay your Hands upon your Loines for very feebleness? And was there not a secret Cry, *That the Lord would appear, and shew you his Salvation; and that he would guide and direct you in the Way where you might find his Presence?* And how wonderfully did God appear for you in that great Streight, as having regard to the Cry of the Poor and the Sighing of the Needy? And how did he manifest his Light in you, to give Light unto you? And did he not then send forth the Messengers of his Covenant in the Spirit of first born among many Brethren? And did not those Messengers declare the Way of God's Salvation to you, and sounded Glad-tidings in your Ears? Did they not instruct you into the Way of Life, Peace and Truth, and preach the Light to be the Way that leadeth unto God? And was not their Message a faithful Testimony, that reached the Faithful Witness in every Conscience, and so laboured to bring all to the Witness in themselves? And when this Glad-tidings was sounded in your Ears, and that your Ears heard, and your Hearts believed; did you not begin to see the emptiness of all other pretended Messengers, and came to a feeling of God's Witness in your own Consciences, and so came to know the

reprovable, and to learn of that which reproved? And did not the Lord herein shew great Kindness unto you, that when you were as a People without Hope in a wearied Condition, then to appear to manifest the Way of Life, wherein you might find Rest to your Souls? And hath not the Lord now shewed you a pleasant Path, where Mercy and Truth meets together, and where Righteousness and Peace embrace and kiss each other? Oh! *never to be forgotten Mercies, but worthy to be had in Everlasting Remembrance*: And ye are happy that keep in remembrance the Days and Times past, wherein God hath shewed you Favour; for thereby you come to feel his Love, Mercies and Favours to be more enlarged unto you; and as ye are come out of the many things, and have found One Thing to be the chiefest, so all mind to keep it as a Pearl of great Price: For ye have found the Lord's Christ, and the Lord's Christ is become your Strength, and Stay, and Salvation; and this is very weighty to be felt upon every ones Heart, *That the Living God hath revealed his Son in you, and that ye know him to be the Lord's Christ*; this is that alone in which your Peace and Felicity standeth immutable, and is of far greater worth and value then the many things: And as in the Light ye have found the Riches and Treasures of an Endless Life, even so to keep in the Light; and keep your Possession, and be not drawn out with any Whimsical Fancies and Conceits to lose your Possession; it is the Word of the living God unto you all: For the Lord hath shewed great Kindness unto you, that ye might glorifie him in your Bodies, Souls and Spirits, as being his, and so to Honour the Lord in all things, for the exceeding Riches of his Kindness towards you: for it is required of all, unto whom the Lord hath shewed Kindness, that they be found faithful, and so to behold
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the Lord in his goings, and go with him, then all will know the things that concern their Peace, and things by which they may edifie one another, and so be a Help and Comfort one to another, even as God is a Help and Comfort unto them: For, how wonderful is the Work which the Lord hath wrought for you in *Egypt*, and bringing you out of *Egypt*, and carrying you through many Tryals, and delivering you from many Enemies; for the Deliverer is come to open the Prison Door, and set the Captive at Liberty; yea, he is come who hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, Christ Jesus, the great Deliverer, the only *Saviour*, *Preserver*, *Sanctifier*, and *Justifier*; and ye that know his coming, ye are Witnesses of the greatness of his Work, and of his Power, Might and Strength in working; and so ye are sensible into what Root ye are planted by the Right hand of the Almighty; and ye know that ye spring up in his Life, as his Off-spring, and that the Pluckers cannot pluck you out of his Hand; for all have been plucking at you, but cannot pluck you out of the Hand of your Planter; and so, he that hath planted you into his Life, he keeps you from being plucked out of it; and it is his *great Mercy unto you*, in that he hath planted you into such a *blessed Root*, and raised you up into it, and keeps you from being plucked out of it; here he gives unto you eternal Life, that ye should not perish, but live forever; and so he hath chosen you, and ordained you to bring forth Fruit, and that your Fruit should remain; for Christ Jesus keeps you by his Power in your Plantation, and none can pluck you out of your Plantation. Therefore all abide in him, who is not of the World, but hath chosen you out of the World; yea, I say, abide in him and your Fruit will remain, and will not be shaken and spoiled with Storms and Tempests, and so you will flourish like the *Palm Tree*, and grow

grow like the Cedars in Libanon: for you that trust in the Lord and whose Hope the Lord is, you are as Trees planted by the Waters; and that spread out their Roots by the Rivers, and shall not see when heat cometh, but their Leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the Year of Drought, or in the Year of Restraint, neither shall cease from yielding Fruit: And so the Almighty God hath chosen you in this day to bear the fruits of Righteousness in his Righteous Life, and by that Fruit ye honour the God of your Salvation, who keeps you in his Life from being plucked out. And so all live in the Faith, which in the Power of God ye have received; keep in the Power that is able to keep you unto the End, and so by Faith get Victory over the World, and please God; and add to your Faith Patience, *that ye may not think the time long in which your Faith is trying*: for the trying of your Faith worketh Patience, to bring forth Fruit; *therefore let Patience have its perfect work, that ye may be entire, lacking nothing*; and as ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned Love of the Brethren, so let your Love be continued as in the beginning; for Brethren, *that keep the Faith, they labour in the Love, which edifies the Body*; and as ye love the Brethren that keep the Faith, there will be no entertainment for the Grudger and Evil Surmizer; for where that spirit is entertained, it corrupts the mind with Evil Thoughts and Self-Conceits, and that runs into Self-Separation, Division and Distraction; but as ye walk in the Light you will feel the Love over all such things; and so love the Brethren, and one another unfeignedly; and that is your Strength, by which the Power of Darkness is to be overcome; for Unity in the Unfeigned Love is the Strength of the Body, and so it is a
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compleat Body under the Rule and Government of Christ Jesus the Head ; and he in all things hath the preeminence unto whom all belongs.

And all walk worthy of the tender Mercies which God hath largely manifested unto you ; and take heed of giving or taking any Occasion of Offence, but all mind your own Conditions and Conceraments ; and let none be Wise in their own Eyes, but look upon themselves with that Eye which can prefer another ; for the lowly Mind, that keeps in the Light, is preserved in the Love that thinketh no ill, and in Love is ready to serve, and doth not seek to be a Master ; for if such a thing doth at any time arise, Offences are at hand, and that doth much hurt as it is put in practice ; therefore all avoid such things, by living in the True Simplicity and Peaceable Wisdom, that ye may all keep the Faith that works by Love, and edifies the Body ; and so all will live as Brethren, in a faithful Testimony to God's Glory, and there his Presence will be with you, and your Joy will be full.

And all keep down to the Power that keeps in the Life, that all your words may favour of Life ; for the words of Life are Gracious words, by which Grace is ministred to the Hearers ; but where words swell above the Life, they only influence upon the Affections, which draweth out of the Peaceable and Quiet Habitation, and from feeling the weighty Life in its Resurrection, and all such Motions run whirling about in the Air, and that stirreth up Tempests, where all are tossed about with Wind and Waves : Therefore all wait to be stayed with the Power of God, which is the Anchor of the Soul, both sure and stedfast. For when the Life rises,

it rises with weight, and all that rise in the Life, they are sound and weighty; for, they stand in the center of Life, and are moved by the motion of it; and there all are preserved in Wisdom and Understanding, and are alwayes nourished with the Nourishment that in the Life is present, and so are alwayes living and fruitful in a certain state; and here all come to be kept in the true Tenderness and Sweetness, out of all Flattery and Feignedness; for the Affections move uncertainly, and never do establish any in their goings, but sometimes will appear as living in the highest degree, and then again will fall and dye, and be as nothing; and that is an uncertain State, where none can stand sure: therefore all mind the Life, and the weighty savory words of Life, that with the Life every one may be truly refreshed, comforted and stablished.

Oh Friends! Be ye all watchful to the Heavenly Light, to be preserved in the feeling of Eternal Life, that ye may all follow the Lamb in his goings, and not go into any thing that is contrary to him; for that draweth a vail over the Life, and obstructeth the Vertue, and then the peevish part is ready to be exceptionous, and streighten the Life, and the Unity in it, and so the evil Eye comes to be opened, and the Whisperer and Reporter to be let at liberty, and then the Enemy works into parties, to spoil the Heritage of God; and it is set much upon me by the Spirit of the Lord to warn and exhort all Friends, To be very circumspect in all their wayes, and to keep to the Light, by which they were first convinced, and in which true Love aboundeth, that none may run out, and grieve the Spirit of the Lord, and bring

bring Grief one upon another, but all keep in the good Unity of the Spirit, which is the Bond of Peace, and so all will understand what to joyn unto, and what to stand at a distance from; for a good Understanding keepeth good Order, and they that have attained to it, they speak with the Spirit and with an Understanding, and pray with the Spirit and with an Understanding, and sing with the Spirit and with an Understanding, and with the Spirit and with an Understanding God is glorified; and unto his Blessed Name and Power be Glory forever, *Amen.*

And Friends, Be very mindful in all things wherein you are concerned, to answer the Lord in Obedience and Faithfulness to the End, that your Hearts and Minds may be constant to persevere in the Way of Godliness, that in the Light you may feel the Strength and Power of Life, to do the Will of God; and so the Lord will keep you in his Way, as a People that are ordered and disposed in his Counsel, and you will be as a *Holy Generation*, and a *Royal Priesthood*, to offer a living Sacrifice of Praise upon his own Altar: For the Lord is exceeding good to all that faithfully love him and serve him; he is nigh to help them wherein his Name and Truth is concerned; for his Power is as the Wings of an *Eagle*, and where his Power beareth up, there is no fainting, but a Faithful Continuing with Joyfulness, *to serve Him unto the End.*

Therefore, all keep in the *Light*, which the Messengers of the Covenant first preached unto you, and by which your Hearts were touched and turned unto God; abide in that, as being the one and only in which the

Love, Life, - Spirit, Power and Wisdom of God resteth ; for all resteth in the *Light* , and in the *Light* all comes to be witnessed in one Nature and Being : and whatsoever would draw your Minds from the *Light* , under any Colour or Pretence, let it not prevail over you, but stand in the *Light* , and resist it as your Enemy : For, as the *Light* is only true, so there is to be an abiding in it ; for all that go from it, to find any thing true above it, they err from the Faith, and wrong themselves ; or, who go from the *Light* , to embrace the World, they enter into the House of Bondage ; and where the Enemy so prevaileth over any, it is because there is not Faithfulness to the *Light* , For, if there be Faithfulness to the *Light* , the Wiles of the Enemy are discovered, and Dangers prevented ; for the *Light* lifts up it self as a Standard against the subtil Worker : And so with the *Light* the Faithful are preserved in their Faithfulness, to walk with God, and do his Will, and there they grow in *Grace and Godliness*, by which the Truth is Honoured.

And herein the great Love of *God* is manifest to all the Faithful, who are indeed his Chosen, and unto whom his Arm is stretched forth for their Preservation ; he only is the *God* of their Salvation, and in his *Life* he causeth all his tender Plants to grow, and with his Virtue he gives them Nourishment, to make them live and be fruitful ; yea, it is He, and none Else, he whose Name endures forever ; and all that wait upon him his Grace falls upon them : Therefore trust ye in Him, whose Name is, *I am, The Lord Strong and Mighty, The Everlasting Immortal God, The Power that is able to subdue all things to it self*, by which ye may all feel the Resurrection
of

of the Immortal Seed, and of the Seed to be born again, and so as Heirs of *Life* to inherit *Life*, and in *Life* to live, that the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Beginning* and *Ending*, may be your Rest : And as ye all dwell in the *Light*, you will be sensible of the Drawings and Leadings of his Hand since the Day in which he first Appeared to you, and how he hath driven back Enemies before you, and brought you forward into a **Wealthy Place**; yea, a Place where ye have found durable Riches: and keeping in the Weighty Power you will have a weighty Life, and so be found as such that walk worthy of the Vocation, unto which God hath called you ; and there you will know the goings on from one degree of Godliness to another, unto the Perfect State in Christ Jesus, and so you will not hastily flye up into the Air, but learn your Goings by degrees, and walk safely, and there your Way will be pleasant to you, and your Reward a Crown ; for, who overcometh, the *Lord* will Crown ; the Overcomers must wear the Crown, as a Token of their Victory over all things contrary to Truth and Purity, and also, as their Glory before him who sets the Crown upon their Head ; and such Honour have all the Saints: *And so in the Power of God all get Victory, and Overcome, that ye may wear the Crown.*

And all be mindful wherein ye are concerned one towards another in all things, that the Peace of *God* in all your Hearts may rule, and that the pure Movings of *God's Power* ye may all know in your Understandings, that every one may know their going forth and coming in as the Power ordereth, and then the Order will be kept, and not broken ; for if the true Power be not understood.

stood in its Movings, but that another thing moveth and acteth, that thing breaks the Order; and none do keep the Order of the *Gospel*, but who live in the Power and understandeth the Motion of it; and so all are to wait upon God, to understand his Counsel and do his Will, and not follow their own Counsel, and do their own Wills; for, if any do so, they will run into Confusion, and come to nothing; but who stand in the Counsel of the *Lord*, and do his Will, they serve him in the order of his own *Life*, by which he hath *Glo-ry*: And so all is to be kept down with the Power, that nothing may be seen or heard but the pure Seed in its own pure *Life*, and then you will feel what the *Lord* makes up to himself, and what he casteth out, that must not come within the Borders of his Land, nor within the Gates of his City, nor within the Doors of his Household and Family; but is separated and cast out, as an unclean thing, which with his Jewels he will not make up; For it is in the Seed that he planteth, and buildeth, and maketh up his Jewels; and so he fitly frames his Building together, and in Him it grows unto an Holy Temple, and there is the Habitation of God through his Spirit; and so the House is built upon the Rock, and not upon the Sand; and the Household are fed with Bread of the finest Wheat, and not with Husks and Chaff; and he is Lord and King in his own House, to Rule, Order and Govern his Household; and his Household live in Order, and not in Confusion, and here ye will all have Rest and fulness of Joy.

Therefore, be Faithful to the End in all things, that ye may Serve, Worship and Honour the God of all Power and Greatness, that by your Faithfulness his

Power and *Greatness* over all the Earth may be exalted, and his Name set above every Name in its own Excellency.

And so, in every good Word and Work be ye all Fruitful, and walk in a Holy and Blameless Conversation; that he, who is *Life*, may be known to be the R O O T and T R E E by the Fruit of Righteousness, who is to Day as Yesterday, and the same forever.

And Friends, Be Careful to Honour *God* in all things; for he Honoureth those that Honoureth him: And take heed that none Dishonour *God* by fond Affections one towards another; for if any go fondly together upon the account of Marriage, they Dishonour *God*, and hurt themselves: And none to be busie in making Motions between Party and Party, or to persuade any to change their Conditions, in which they themselves are satisfied to continue and abide; but let every one feel the Truth in themselves, and the Movings of it in their own Hearts, to dispose them in such a Weighty Concernment, and then the *Ordinance of God* will be known in the Covenant of Life; and such a Marriage will Honour God, as being Honourable in the Undeified Seed.

And all keep your Judgment in the Power, Life, and Wisdom that judgeth Righteously, that you may be able to discern and try spirits, whether they are of God; and let no fair Shew or Appearance out of the Life come over you to vail your Judgment and Discerning, nor no feigned Love or Humility sway your Affections;

ctions ; for if any let in such things, by letting out themselves to comply or joyn with them, they will let Darkness over their Judgment, and lose their Judgment, and then they cannot put a Difference between the Precious and the Vile in a sound Judgement, and so may be taken and snared with a smooth formed spirit in Carriage or Words. Therefore all be mindful and careful to keep Sound Judgment, that not any thing, contrary to the Spirit and Life of God, may come over you ; but keep the Judgment of Truth upon all, and set true Judgment over all ; and do not set a Byass upon your Judgment, to turn or wrest you aside in Judgment ; but all Judge in Truth and Righteousness, in which you will also feel the Mercy.

And all keep in the Stayed Sollid Life, and let not your Minds run after New Things, to draw you from the Sound and Weighty Truth which you have seen, and heard, and believed, but what is manifested unto you, either by Word or Writing, let the Heavenly Truth be Received, and Embraced, and Lived in, and none to run after new things to forget the old ; and so you will all keep in mind the Sound and Wholesome Doctrine, which hath plentifully been delivered by Faithful Brethren, both by Word and Epistle, and the Doctrine will abide and remain in you, and you will abide and remain in the Doctrine : For, the preaching of the Grace of God by Jesus Christ is the Sound and Wholesom Doctrine, which all are to receive and believe ; and whether it be preached by Word or Epistle, it setteth and establieth the Heart and Mind of those that receive it, and believe in it, and they come

to grow in Grace, which is the Doctrine preached unto them, and by them received and believed: And so, Sound Doctrine maketh a Sound People, and you that have received it, and believe in it, you are made Sound by it; and whatsoever is manifest of that Nature, as a renewing of the Testimony, it doth more confirm you in the Doctrine which ye have already received, but never draweth you from it; and so you keep the Doctrine from first to last, and do not forget any part of it: And you do well that keep in mind the Sound and Wholsom Doctrine of the Gospel, and the Sound and Wholsom Exhortations with which ye have been exhorted into Obedience and Faithfulness in things pertaining to the Gospel-Doctrine, and so keepeth in the Gospel-Fellowship and Order; yea, I say, ye do well who are thus mindful of that Doctrine, which in and by the Spirit of God hath been preached unto you; ye keep in that which is Sound and Wholsom, and out of that which Putrifies and Corrupts, and so come to live in the ingrafted Word, that is able to save your Souls.

And all Friends, Keep your Meetings in the Faith, and hold fast the Profession of your Faith in all Meetings; and keep in mind the great Refreshment with which ye have been refreshed in Meetings, and which still remains with all the Faithful; and watch against that spirit and nature which at any time bringeth Heaviness and Drowsiness upon you in Meetings; and when you feel such a thing coming upon you, do not give way to it, to be overcome by it, but with the Power of God resist it in time, and so you will feel

the Power as a Spring of Living Water, to refresh your Souls.

Oh! let your Dilligence be improved in Watchfulness and Perseverance, that ye may all feel the Power and Life over that which would at any time vail you from beholding the excellent Glory and from pertaking of the Heavenly and Living Vertue, that so you may all feel the Arm which preserveth, and drink at the River which Refresheth and Nourisheth, that ye may be Strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might, and so be able to resist and overcome the Enemy in all his Appearances. And in all your Meetings be tender over the Good one in another, that ye may be a Comfort one to another; and so, in the Peaceable Wisdom to live and Glorifie God.

And Friends, Do not run into Superfluities in Meats; Drinks or Apparel, to come under the Power of any; but all wait to be preserved in Sobriety, Temperance, and Humility: And do not fashion your selves like unto the World, in their Novelties and new Fashions; for they know not what to eat or drink, or put on, and so are from that which should lead them into Comeliness and Modesty, and follow that which leadeth them into Vanity and Folly; but do you dwell in the Heavenly LIGHT, by which you may Adorn the Blessed Gospel, and Honour the Lord God of all your Mercies.

Finally,

Finally, Brethren, Fare-ye-well; Live in Peace, and Truth, and Holiness, and Righteousness, and Godliness, and Love, and the God of Love, and Peace and of all Heavenly Vertues and Graces will be with you, into whose Everlasting Arms I commit you, and in the Love of his Life I am dearly with you all.

The 7th Moneth, }
1672.

William Smith.

*Let this EPISTLE be read among Friends in the
Power and Wisdom of Truth.*

THE END.
